

Stormwater Management

What we do on land eventually affects our water resources.

Stormwater runoff is the excess rain or melted snow that cannot be absorbed by the soil and flows off our roofs, and over our yards, parking lots, and streets. It becomes [nonpoint source pollution](#) [□](#) when it picks up contaminants along the way such as litter, fertilizer, and car oils, and enters a storm drain system where it is transported to a waterbody. Stormwater runoff has been identified by the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) [□](#) (EPA) as a major contributor of pollution to our watercourses, waterbodies and wetlands, and is also a concern for [flooding \(/flood\)](#).

Storm Drains

Storm drains are the grate openings you see along curbs, streets and parking lots. Their purpose is to collect stormwater runoff and direct it through a conveyance system to a discharge point such as a stream or lake. A sanitary sewer, on the other hand, takes household waste water from toilets, sinks and showers and transports it to a wastewater treatment facility where the water is treated thoroughly before it is released.

Frogline - Nonpoint Source Pollution Education Video

Join [Finneas Frog and Kris Kroak](#) [□](#) as they show us how to prevent nonpoint source pollution in our daily lives in a YouTube video presented by [Water Environment Federation](#) [□](#).

Westchester County Efforts

In November 1999 the EPA finalized regulations that require small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s) in urbanized areas to reduce discharges from storm sewers to the maximum extent practicable by developing and implementing programs to manage stormwater runoff. Many of Westchester County's programs already meet these permit requirements, and others are being created to provide even more protection of our water resources.

▪ County Stormwater Program

Westchester County is also a regulated entity under the Phase II program. For information on the county stormwater program, annual reports, and other information, contact David Kvinge, Assistant Commissioner by phone at (914) 995-2089 or by e-mail at dsk2@westchestercountyny.gov.

▪ Stormwater Education and Outreach Program

The Department of Planning, in partnership with most of Westchester's local municipalities, created a regional Stormwater Education and Outreach program through a grant from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). The program helps residents and others learn about ways that they can reduce stormwater pollution. For more information, please explore the links located on the left side of this page.

▪ Stormwater Retrofits

The County is installing a variety of stormwater best management practices (BMPs) to treat runoff from existing impervious areas. A map of these BMP locations, along with project information sheets, will be available online upon completion of the retrofits.

▪ Illicit Discharge

Westchester County field personnel conduct routine testing of the county's stormwater system to detect and pinpoint the sources of illicit discharges, but they also depend on the public to report any possible sources of pollution. Please contact the illicit discharge hotline, through the county Department of Health at (914) 813-5000 or the Department of Public Works at (914) 995-3660. Please provide the location and nature of the incident (odor, visible pollutants, illegal dumping, etc.) so the county can notify the appropriate personnel and respond in the most effective manner. The County's law regulating discharges to its storm sewer system can be found [here](#) [□](#).

What can I do?

Your day-to-day activities on land have an effect on your water quality, whether it's your drinking water or your favorite beach, but there are simple things that you can do differently in order to protect this valuable, natural resource.

- Start by familiarizing yourself with the [water cycle](#) [□](#).

- Then identify the watershed ☐ you live in so that you understand which water bodies are affected by your land use activities.
- Build a rain garden ([/rain-gardens](#)) or a rain barrel ([/rain-barrels](#)) on your property.
- Explore the individual land use activities links on the left side of this page.

For more information, contact David Kvinge at dsk2@westchestercountyny.gov, (914) 995-2089, or Nicole Laible at nvle@westchestercountyny.gov, (914) 995-4423.